

ORIENTAL LORE IN THE TATLER
SPECTATOR, GUARDIAN, FREE-
HOLDER OF ADDISON & STEELE

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GRADUATE SCHOOL

Thesis

ORIENTAL LORE IN THE ~~TATLER~~, SPECTATOR,
GUARDIAN and FREEHOLDER

by

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submitted in partial fulfilment of the
requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts

1948

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FREEHOLDER OF ADDISON AND STEELE

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ABSTRACT

INTRODUCTION

Ever since olden times the people of the Occident have felt the charm and glamor that surrounds everything oriental, and the interest which at first may have been especially strong because the "gorgeous East" was so far away and practically unknown to all but a select few, has not slackened since new means of communication have opened these formerly unknown regions to the larger mass of people.

Since early times the East and its literature have been a source from which the West has freely borrowed. There always remained some connection with and influence of the East, sometimes less strong, sometimes more so, when through some particular event such as the Crusades, the invasions of the Turks and Mongols, the exploration of India, and in the eighteenth century, the conquest of India by the English and the study of oriental languages and history, it received a fresh impulse.

It is my intent to show that Addison and Steele came under the charm and spell of the Orient. The prose works of these two essayists show their interest in oriental

folklore and legends as found in their Tatler, Spectator, Guardian and Freeholder papers. In the eighteenth century it was especially a certain kind of oriental or pseudo-¹oriental prose-tale that flourished, of which Miss Conant gives the following definition:

In form this fiction includes within its wide range the frame-tale, in which stories - sometimes in letterform - are inclosed; isolated apologues and other short tales used to point the moral of an Addisonian or Johnsonian essay; tales equally fantastic but colored by satire.....

The contacts England had with foreign countries in the later part of the seventeenth century and the eighteenth were transforming the daily life and the thoughts and actions of millions of Englishmen. The fascination of the Orient in particular held the English mind under its spell, and played no small part in moulding the operation of English thought. It is certain that the growing knowledge of distant lands and people, of their ideas and philosophies, of the animals, birds and plants, of British possessions overseas, must have fired the imagination of people at home in countless ways, devious and subtle; that

¹ Conant, Martha P., The Oriental Tale in England in the Eighteenth Century, New York, 1908, p. 226.

a realization of the extent, of the character and the responsibility of empire, must have affected in a manner certain, though intangible, the thoughts and actions of all those who came under its spell. And the spell of empire was by no means confined to the commercial classes and the nobility. The sailors could spin thrilling tales of adventure, or recount strange customs or sights from lands afar to their families at the fireside, or to their cronies at the taverns and coffeehouses. Countless pamphlets and books on travel furnished food and stimulus to the intelligence of those who could read.²

It was in the coffeehouses, the rendezvous of sailors, travellers and the intelligentsia of England, that the Spectator picked up his bits of information of the lands across the seas. "Sometimes," the Spectator informs us, "I smoke a Pipe at Child's; and whilst I seem attentive to nothing but the Post-Man, overhear the Conversations of every table in the Room." (Spectator, No. 1.)

2 Botsford, Jay B., English Society in the Eighteenth Century, New York, 1924. Ch. I.

W.E.Lunt³ informs us about the coffeehouses and what went on in them, in his description of the routine of an eighteenth century gentleman. He writes:

The life of a gentleman of leisure about town was largely a round of pleasure. His day was likely to begin with a walk in the park, where he could join the parade of fashionable society. Thence he might proceed to a coffeehouse, "for 'tis a rule with the English to go once a day at least to houses of this sort." These had become in London a social institution. The introduction of coffee, chocolate, and tea as common beverage had led to the establishment of the first coffeehouse near the middle of the seventeenth century. Coffeehouses rapidly became centers for the discussion of news. The coffeehouses kept copies of current newspapers, and many patrons attended merely to read the latest news. They naturally became centers of political discussion, and particular houses became associated with habitual groups. The literary men and the wits could be found at certain houses, others were the resorts of politicians, while others attracted the dandies. Early in the eighteenth century a contemporary estimated the number in London at 3,000, and they long continued to be centers of "news," politics, and fashion."

The coffeehouses reached the zenith of their popularity about the time of Queen Anne. From the very outset they took on a personal character as shown by the names of the more popular places. "Tom's," "Will's," "John's," were evidently founded and operated by several

3 Lunt, W.E., History of England, New York, 1945. p. 534.

waiters of an earlier period who had contrived to save a little money. "Child's on Paternoster Row rejoiced in dispelling the cares of a clergyman's duties; at "Dick's" and the Grecian legal lights and shadows shed the brilliance of argumentative wit: while Dryden gave to Will's the reputation of being the "Humorist Coffeehouse." At the "Smyrna", one might "in the noble Sciences of Music, Poetry, and Politics, be instructed Gratis, with elaborate ESSAYS by word of Mouth.....The disciples are to prepare their Bodies with three Dishes of Bohea, and purge their Brains with two Pinches of Snuff." (The Tatler, Oct. 1709] It was the ambition of Addison to bring "Philosophy out of closets and libraries, schools and colleges, to dwell in clubs and assemblies, at teatables and coffeehouses." (The Spectator, Mar. 1, 1711.) The object was to popularize knowledge by essays fit for the capacity of the average reader.

By way of clearness, we may first distinguish clearly the meaning of Orient and Oriental. Though these words convey to most minds a signification definite enough as opposed, broadly, to Occident and Occidental, they are yet capable of various interpretations when the question of exact delimitation is raised. What are the exact or

approximate boundaries of the Orient? In the broadest sense, an Oriental is one whose native habitat lies, without respect to time, within the following geographical area in the three continents of Europe, Africa, and Asia. In Europe, the Balkan States, Greece and Turkey; in Africa, all the lands bordering the southern shore of the Mediterranean, including the modern states of Morocco, Algeria, Tunis, Tripoli and Egypt; in Asia, practically the entire continent from the Mediterranean to the Pacific, including the Oceanic Archipelago.

According to Miss Conant⁴ Oriental fiction had been borne to England from an early period by various kinds of influence. As far back as the eleventh century, fictitious descriptions of the marvels of India are found in Anglo-Saxon translations of legends concerning Alexander the Great. During the Middle Ages many Eastern stories drifted across Europe by way of Syria, Byzantium, Italy, and Spain. Merchants and travelers like Marco Polo, missionaries, pilgrims, and crusaders aided the oral transmission of this fiction.

In the sixteenth century, that great period of

⁴ op. cit., p. 11.

translation, were published the first English editions of the Gesta Romanorum and of the Fables of Bidpai, the latter entitled The Morall Philosophie of Doni....englished out of Italian by Thomas North. During the reign of Elizabeth an entirely new line of intercourse between England and the East was established by the voyages of exploration, discovery, and commerce, characteristic of the Renaissance. In the seventeenth century, interest in the Orient was shown by the works of travelers, historians, translators of French heroic romances, dramatists, and orientalists.

The sudden advent of the Arabian Nights, full of the life, the color, and glamor of the East, even in the Gallicized version of Antoine Galland, naturally opened a new chapter in the history of oriental fiction in England. Galland first introduced this book to the Western world under the French translation: Les Mille et une Nuit, Contes Arabes traduits en Francais par M. Galland. A Paris 1704 - 1717. The book was immediately translated from the French into English, though the exact date of the first publication is not known. According to Miss De Meester⁵ the Tales of the Thousand and One Nights were

⁵ Anglistische Forschungen, "Oriental Influences in the English Literature of the Nineteenth Century," Heidelberg, 1915. p. 11.

considered at first an imposture of Galland's, but they won their way to the hearts of the people, and in the course of the eighteenth century the intercourse with the East increased, the interest in the history of these tales also increased. Miss De Meester informs us that some of the manuscripts were found, which were translated by German and English scholars, and the Arabic stories began to exercise a far-reaching influence on the literature of the Western countries.

Galland translated less than a quarter of all the tales, but incorporated a number of Persian, Turkish and Arabic stories that were known to him. He also adapted the tales, which indeed are coarse, to Western conditions and to the taste of Western civilization, not always, however, improving them through this treatment. John Payne⁶ in The Book of the Thousand Nights and One Night says:

It is much to be regretted that the French translator should have thought himself entitled to deal with the original text in a manner which in the present day, more strict upon the question of fidelity and local coloring would certainly have been visited with the severest reprobation.

⁶ Payne, John; The Book of the Thousand Nights and One Night; its History and Character, London, 1884.

We notice that the literature of this period has a tendency to appeal to the imagination, since the stories are highly imaginative, to moralize, to philosophize and to satirize. Thus we think it best to group the Essays of the Tatler, Spectator, Guardian and Freeholder into four groups, Imaginative, Moralistic, Philosophic and Satiric.

CHAPTER I

THE IMAGINATIVE GROUP

To stories from the Orient Addison appears to have been greatly attached: "I have always been wonderfully delighted," he observes, "with fables, allegories, and the like inventions, which the politest and the best instructors of mankind have always made use of. They take off from the severity of instruction, and enforce it at the same time that they conceal it." (Tatler, No.90.) It is well known that Addison was peculiarly partial to the Arabian Tales. That he read them in the version of Galland is evident from No. 535 of the Spectator, where he particularly mentions his translation, and has given us a fable from the collection:

What I have here said, may serve as a moral to an Arabian fable, which I find translated into French by Monsieur Galland. The fable has in it such a wild, but natural simplicity, that I question not by my readers will be as much pleased with it as I have been, and that they will consider themselves, if they reflect on the several amusements of Hope which have sometimes passed in their minds, as a near relation to the Persian Glassman.

According to Nathan Drake⁷ it was Addison who

7 Drake, Nathan. Essays, Biographical, Critical and Historical, Illustrative of the Tatler, Spectator and Guardian. London, 1805, II, p. 232.

probably recommended to Phillips the translation of the Persian Tales, a genuine oriental work, from the French version of Petis de la Croix. The first volume of Phillip's Tales was published in 1709, and the second is advertised on August 20th, 1714, at the close of No. 583 of the Spectator; (The advertisement runs thus: "Persian Tales, volume two translated by Mr. Phillips, author of the Pastorals and the Distressed Mother.") and as about this time Phillips is supposed to have resided in the same house with Addison, Drake argues that it is not an extravagant conjecture to conceive that he might have received occasional assistance from his pen.

Addison has been accused of not indulging the powers of imagination in his poetical effusions, but it may justly be asserted, that he has amply atoned for the deficiency in his Prose compositions. In the Vision of Mirza,⁸ Shalum and Hilpa,⁹ and Alnaras chin, King of Persia,¹⁰ we find the imagery very powerful, simple and elevating. Mr. Drake assures us that Addison was intimately acquainted with the writings of Chardin, Herbelot, M. Petis de la Croix, and Galland, which is evident from

8 Spectator, No. 159.

9 Ibid., Nos. 584, 585.

10 Guardian, No. 167.

the beautiful apologues dispersed through the Spectator and Guardian.

The Spectator tells us "when I was at Grand Cairo, I picked up several oriental manuscripts, which I have still by me. Among others I met with one entitled, The Vision of Mirza which I have read over with great pleasure." This essay, although a vision, deals with pastoral imagery. There is a strong appeal to the sense of hearing when the music of the shepherds is described. This music we are informed "puts one in mind of those heavenly airs that played to the departed souls of good men upon their arrival in paradise, to wear out the impressions of the last agonies, and qualify them for the pleasures of that happy place. My heart melted away in secret raptures." Music plays a very important part in the funeral of an oriental. Music accompanies the funeral cortege to the departed last resting place. "Misty clouds, shining seas, flowers, fruits, sheep, camels, and oxen," all are artistically presented to the reader's eye and enable him to enjoy the oriental setting.

In the story of Shalum and Hilpa there is a

strong appeal made to the imagination. We are indirectly asked to "suspend our disbelief" when we are informed that "Hilpa was in the hundred and sixtieth year of her age at the death of her husband." We feel that to the oriental imagery there is added a bit of English humor when the Spectator writes, "Many made love to the young widow." The letter that Shalum pens to Hilpa is truly oriental in coloring:

What have I not suffered, O thou daughter of Zilpah, since thou gavest thyself away in marriage to my rival? I grew weary of the light of the sun, and have since ever been covering myself with woods and forest. These threescore and ten years have I bewailed the loss of thee on top of Mount Tirzah and soothed my melancholy among a thousand gloomy shades of my own raising. My dwellings are at present as the garden of God; everyone of them is filled with fruits and flowers, and fountains. The whole mountain is perfumed for thy reception. Come up into it, O my beloved, and let us people this spot of the new world with a beautiful race of mortals; let us multiply exceedingly among these delightful shades, and fill every quarter of them with sons and daughters. Remember, O thou daughter of Zilpah, that the age of man is but a thousand years; that beauty is the admiration but of a few centuries. It flourished as a mountain oak, or as a cedar on the top of Tirzah, which in three or four hundred years will fade away, and never be thought of by posterity, unless a young wood springs from its roots. Think well on this, and remember thy neighbor in the mountains.

In marriage an oriental has both feet on the ground and both eyes wide open. Only a westerner can

say, "love is blind." It would seem that one eye takes in the beauty of the beloved, while the other is focused on the size of the dowry. Hilpa, "the young widow," in answering Shalum is reminding him of his personal interest in wishing to marry her.

What have I to do with thee, O Shalum? Thou praisest Hilpa's beauty, but art thou not secretly enamoured with the verdure of her meadow? Art thou not more affected with the prospect of her green valleys, than thou wouldest be with the sight of her person? The lowings of my herds, and the bleatings of my flocks, make a pleasant echo in thy mountains, and sound sweetly in thy ears. What though I am delighted with wavings of thy forests, and those breezes which flow from the top of Tirzah: are these like the riches of the valleys?

I know thee, O Shalum; thou art more wise and happy than any of the sons of men. Thy dwellings are among the cedars; thou searchest out the diversity of soils, thou understandest the influences of thy stars, and markest the change of seasons. Can a woman appear lovely in the eyes of such a one? Disquiet me not, O Shalum; let me alone, that I may enjoy those goodly possessions which are fallen to my lot. Win me not by thy enticing words. May thy trees increase and multiply; mayest thou add wood to wood, and shade to shade; but tempt not Hilpa to destroy thy fortitude, and make thy retirement populous.

There is no doubt that these letters are pseudo-oriental. Widows rarely, if ever, marry a second time. For the orientals have a proverb which says, "men do not drink from other men's cisterns." The arrangement

of the marriage is always made by a third party. Of the two letters, Hilpa's is the more oriental in style. It is characteristic of the oriental to use the third person when speaking of himself, and then with deprecatory phrases. Here Hilpa puts herself in the third person and then half way through the letter slips back to the first. One finds the phraseology of these two letters quite Biblical in coloring. In these short letters there is a strong appeal to the five senses.

Although Addison clothed these narratives in oriental imagery, he did not lose sight of the moral aspect of the Spectator. In number 94 of the Spectator the value of time is exquisitely illustrated by the story of the sultan of Egypt and the Mahometan Doctor:

I shall leave my reader to compare these Eastern fables with the notions of those two great philosophers (Locke and Mallebranche) whom I quoted in this Paper; and shall only, by way of application, desire him to consider how we may extend life beyond its natural dimensions, by applying ourselves diligently to the pursuits of knowledge.

The uncertainty and vicissitudes of life are clearly brought out in number 289 of the Spectator by the Dervise of Tartary. We can not but admire how neatly the reward of humility is clearly illustrated and brought home to the

reader by the Persian Fable of a drop of water in number 293 of the Spectator:

Since on this subject I have already admitted several quotations, which have occurred to my memory upon writing this Paper, I will conclude it with a little Persian fable. A drop of water fell out of a cloud into the sea, and finding itself lost in such an immensity of fluid matter broke out into the following reflection: 'Alas! What an inconsiderable creature am I in this prodigious ocean of waters; my existence is of no concern to the universe, I am reduced to a kind of nothing, and am less than the least of the works of God.' It so happened that an oyster, which lay in the neighborhood of this drop, chanced to gape and swallow it up in the midst of this its humble soliloquy. The drop, says the fable, lay a great while hardening in the shell, until by degrees it was ripened into a pearl, which falling into the hands of a diver, after a long series of adventures, is at present that famous pearl which is fixed on the top of a Persian diadem.

The best mode or manner of giving advice is found in the Turkish tale of the Sultan Mahmoud and his Visier in number 512 of the Spectator. Alnaschar, the Arabian apologue in number 535 of the Spectator, shows the folly of indulging visionary schemes. In the Guardian, number 99, the impartiality of justice is brought out by the narrative of the Sultan and the Poor Man.

The style which Addison has adopted in his oriental tales, and in his translation of the apologues,

is precisely such as corresponds to the best ages of Arabian literature. The sweetness and simplicity of Addison's diction, add, more than is usually imagined, to the effect and poignancy of these interesting tales. The dialogue of the Barmecide (Guardian No. 162), for example, of Sultan Mahmoud (Spectator No. 512) and the Dervise (Spectator No. 289) owes much of its archness and humor to the elegant plainness of the language employed; and in the Vision of Mirza no reader can be insensible to the ease, amenity, and grace of style which clothe and heighten the imagery of that exquisite composition.

CHAPTER II

THE MORALISTIC GROUP

We have seen among the imaginative tales that there are some that approach the moralistic. For the meaning of the word "moral" we shall take that of Dr. Johnson's: "Doctrine inculcated by a fiction; the accommodation of a fable to form the morals." It is this meaning that best characterizes the numerous moral oriental tales in eighteenth-century England - the tales which we designate as "moralistic."

In the hands of Addison and Steele the oriental tale was speedily utilized to inculcate right living and was made into a story "with a purpose," in a word, became moralistic. The avowed aim of the Spectator and the Tatler was to reconcile wit and morality, to entertain and to preach, to hold the mirror of kindly ridicule up to society, to smile away the follies or vices of the world, and to present serene, temperate, and beautiful ideals of thought and of conduct. Hence, even the fiction that frequently constitutes a vital part of the essays is permeated with the same spirit. This holds

true of the character sketches of Addison's real and imaginary correspondents and acquaintances, including even Sir Roger himself. It is true also, of the frequent allegorical visions and dreams, of the numerous classical stories, and of the occasional oriental tales. To these various kinds of fiction Addison more than Steele turned, "rambling," as he says, "into several stories, fetching one to my present purpose." Attracted as the great essayists were by the touch of extravagance, the strange dress and coloring, the unfamiliar nomenclature and oriental fancies in these tales, they felt constrained, nevertheless, to apologize for such unclassical material and to justify their use of it. In the Spectator No 512, on the fable as the best form of giving advice, Addison tells the entertaining story of the Sultan Mahmoud and the vizier who pretended to understand bird's conversation, and introduces it by saying: "There is a pretty instance of this nature in a Turkish Tale, which I do not like the worse for that little oriental extravagance which is mixed with it." "The virtue of complaisance in friendly intercourse is very prettily illustrated by a little wild Arabian Tale," the Story of Shacabac and the

Barmecide's Feast.¹¹

The story of the Santon Barsisa¹² is praised by Steele for suggesting serious reflections and an obvious Christian moral. Alnaschar from the Arabian Nights is used to conclude an essay upon the transitoriness of human life and the vain hope of worldly ambitions. Addison says, "What I have here said may serve as a moral to an Arabian fable which I find translated into French by Monsieur Galland (and which is marked by) a wild but natural simplicity."¹³ In the story of the Persian Emperor's Riddle,¹⁴ the question, What is the tree that has three hundred and sixty-five leaves, black and white?" is one of the riddles in the story of the Princess of China (Persian Tales). The same answer is given, "year," but Addison affixes the reflection that the leaves represent the king's acts, which look white to his friends and black to his enemies. The "Persian Story" of the just sultan, who executed a culprit in the

11 Guardian, No. 162.

12 Ibid., No. 148.

13 Spectator, No. 535.

14 Freeholder No. 99.

dark, though he knew that it might be his son, concludes an essay on justice.¹⁵ The riddle-like acts of the sultan and his final explanation seem characteristically oriental.

Two tales are apparently original with Addison: the Story of Helim and Abdallah¹⁶ and the Story of Hilpa, Harpath, and Shalum.¹⁷ The former Addison says he found "lately translated out of an Arabian manuscript." It has, he thinks, "very much the turn of an oriental tale;....never before printed;....(and doubtless will be) highly acceptable to the reader." From such an introduction we naturally infer that Addison invented the tale. The character of the story confirms this inference. Helim, the great physician, educates Ibrahim and Abdallah, sons to the tyrant Alnareschin, who has killed thirty-five wives and twenty sons. Abdallah and Balsora, the daughter of Helim, fall in love; the king covets Balsora; Helim gives her a sleeping potion; and she wakes in a tomb with Abdallah. They escape past the guards in the guise of spirits and live happily in a

¹⁵ Guardian, No. 99.

¹⁶ Ibid., No. 167.

¹⁷ Spectator, No. 584, 585.

beautiful retreat on a mountain. After the tyrant's death Helim reunites Ibrahim and Abdallah, and ultimately Abdallah's son succeeds Ibrahim. For oriental coloring Addison refers to the seal of Solomon, Persia, Mahomet, etc. His characters are the commonplace types: the tyrant, the wise physician, the beautiful girl, and others. He employs fanciful touches in describing the black marble palace with its hundred ebony doors guarded by negroes and its five thousand lamps; and also in recounting the lovers' escape by moonlight as spirits in white and azure silk robes. No direct moral is drawn, but virtue is rewarded and vice thwarted. The other moral oriental tale Addison calls "an antediluvian novel,"¹⁸ the Story of Hilpa, Harpath, and Shalum. Addison pretends to have found it in some Chinese records, "the only antediluvian billet-doux in existence," and attempts to give verisimilitude by localizing it in places with fictitious names that have an oriental sound, and by using flowery language. A humorous effect of mock antiquity is obtained by exaggerating the age of the characters, - Hilpa, for instance, is a beautiful girl of

18 Spectator, No. 583.

seventy, - and a touch of satire, by implying that only an antediluvian woman would marry for money. Although the tale contains no explicit moral, it is used to illustrate a "kind or moral virtue" - the planting of trees. Antediluvians had an advantage over us in that they outlived the trees they planted. The lack of direct moralizing in these two original papers is unusual: at least half the oriental tales quoted or adapted in the Addisonian periodicals enunciate an express moral lesson. The morality, like the philosophy, is not distinctly oriental in character. Industry, economy, health and cleanliness, prudence and justice, kindly "complaisance," the art of giving advice and seeking instruction, serenity in the face of calumny and death, - it is the Addisonian code of virtues in oriental guise.

The importance of the moralistic tales rests on this, that Addison initiated the method employed in writing moral oriental tales. This method was enlarged upon and perfected by Dr. Johnson, Dr. Goldsmith and others. The attitude Addison took toward this oriental material and the use he made of it are exceedingly interesting to the student of the period, even though the actual tales he composed are so few and so trifling. If we consider

the Moralistic Group as a whole, our strongest impression is that of the general paucity of literary merit.

The moral oriental tales composed by Addison and Steele are the least valuable part of their work, far inferior, for instance to the philosophic oriental tales.

CHAPTER III

THE PHILOSOPHIC GROUP

The Philosophic Group of oriental tales is in number far smaller and in literary value far more considerable than the Moralistic. Here, again, Addison was the guide, using several oriental stories to illustrate philosophical ideas and composing one famous oriental or rather sketch, The Vision of Mirza.¹⁹ Mirza, from the topmost pinnacle of the high hills of Bagdad, beholds multitudes passing over the bridge of life, which spans a part of the great tide of eternity. Sooner or later all fall from the bridge and are borne out into the thick mist toward either the islands of the blest or the dark clouds beyond the rock of adamant. By means of this vision, Mirza realizes the vicissitudes of life, the certainty of death, the consolation of faith, and the mystery enveloping man's existence. It is Addison's way of saying "From the great deep to the great deep he goes." The form of the Vision is simplicity and clearness itself.

¹⁹ Spectator, No. 159.

The language, lucid and direct, displays Addison's characteristic restraint in the use of oriental ornament and imagery. The literary value of The Vision of Mirza as an oriental tale lies less in the specific detail of oriental coloring than in the general impression of beauty and of awe. "But instead of the rolling tide, the arched bridge, and the happy islands, I saw nothing but the long hollow valley of Bagdat, with oxen, sheep, and camels, grazing upon the sides of it," - a serene English valley, orientalized only by the name Bagdat and the presence of the camels. And yet, if the oriental elements were cut away ~~from~~ The Vision of Mirza, the picturesque attributes of the central metaphor, the bridge of human life would go, for they are drawn from the Mahometan tradition of the bridge "Al Sirat," laid across hell, "finer than a hair and sharper than the edge of a sword," over which the souls of men pass, - the good to the Mahometan ~~paradise~~, the wicked to hell, which is encircled by a wall of adamant. Moreover, the quiet, cumulative force of one slight stroke of oriental imagery after another produces a sense of remoteness and stimulates the imagination, especially when the phrases echo Biblical cadences and thus attain an added solemnity.

"Surely," said I, 'man is but a shadow and life a dream ' 'The valley that thou seest,' said he, 'is the vale of misery, and the tide of water that thou seest, is part of the great tide of eternity. . . . ' 'I wished for the wings of an eagle that I might fly away to those happy seats; but the genius told me there was no passage to them except through the gates of death.'"

The other philosophic oriental tales in the Addisonian periodicals illustrate various themes: the transitoriness of life, the subjectivity of time, personal identity, and so on. Frequent phrases suggest that in oriental thought and imagery what appealed most forcibly to Addison's reverent nature was "likeness to those beautiful metaphors in scripture."²⁰ One brief story is told by him to illustrate the figure "where life is termed a pilgrimage, and those who pass through it are called strangers and sojourners upon earth," and to conclude an essay on the value of contemplating the transitoriness of human life. A dervish mistakes a palace for an inn, and when the king asks an explanation, replies by a series of questions leading up to an admir-

²⁰ Spectator, No. 289

able climax. "Sir, says the Dervish, 'give me leave to ask your Majesty a question or two. Who were the persons that lodged in this house when it was first built?' The King replied, his ancestors. 'And who, 'says the Dervish, 'was the last person that lodged here?' The King replied, his father. 'And who is it,' says the Dervish, 'that lodges here at present?' The King told him that it was he himself. 'And who," says the Dervish, 'will be here after you?' The King answered, the young Prince, his son. 'Ah, Sir,' said the Dervish, 'a ~~house~~ that changes its inhabitants so often and receives such a perpetual succession of guests, is not a Palace, but a Caravansary.'" The oriental coloring here is slightly stronger than in The Vision of Mirza. The Dervish, "traveling through Tartary," arrived "at the town of Balk,...laid down his wallet and spread his carpet in order to repose himself upon it, after the manner of Eastern nations." The notion of the subjectivity of time as set forth by Locke is exemplified in the account of Mahomet's journey to the seven heavens in the twinkling of an eye, as well as by the adventures of the Sultan of Egypt.²¹ The latter story, drawn from the Turkish

²¹ Spectator, No. 94

Tales, is interestingly told, though shorn of most of its picturesque details. From the Persian Tales an unknown contributor to the Spectator takes the story of Fadlallah and Zemroude, and introduces it by a quotation from John Locke on personal identity and by these remarks: "I was mightily pleased by a story in some measure applicable to this piece of philosophy, which I read the other day in the Persian Tales, as they are lately very well translated by Mr. Philips...these stories are writ after the Eastern Manner, but somewhat more correct."²² The writer chastens the style of his quotation still further by eliminating many of the imaginative elements for the sake of the "piece of philosophy." The idea of perpetual suspense is illustrated by reference not only to the medieval ass between two bundles of hay but also to Mahomet's coffin suspended in midair by magnets.²³ The misery and ingratitude of humanity is shown by a vision.²⁴ The conception of the development of philosophy and virtue in a man on a desert island, guided by "the pure light and universal benevolence of nature,"²⁵ is given as a quotation from an Arabian author. In all these

²² Spectator, No 578.

²³ Ibid., No. 191.

²⁴ Ibid., No. 604.

²⁵ Guardian, No. 61.

narratives or fragments of narratives the tone is speculative rather directly didactic, but all except Fadlallah and Zemroude are use to point a moral. With one exception, all the philosophical and moral ideas in the twenty-nine oriental tales found in these periodicals, from the opening number of the Tatler, in 1709, to the last issue of the Freeholder, in 1716, are either noticeably English in character or else universal ideas, common to English and oriental thought. The one exception is the doctrine of transmigration of souls,²⁶ which has been attributed to oriental philosophy. Yet this doctrine is Pythagorean as well as oriental, and the ultimate source, though possibly oriental, is unknown. In general the philosophizing in the periodicals, is along the lines of universal thought, expressed in a thoroughly English and Addisonian manner.

²⁶ Spectator, No. 343.

CHAPTER IV

THE SATIRIC GROUP

In France satire used the oriental tale seriously for the purpose of criticizing contemporary society, morals, and politics; but also turned its criticism against the oriental tale itself, which it travestied and parodied. These forms of satire we may term, respectively, social and literary, - the former, satire by means of the oriental; the latter, satire upon the oriental tale. Addison and Steel, greatly influenced by the French writers, were the first notable English men of letters to utilize the oriental material as a vehicle of satire. In the case of the moralistic and philosophic groups of oriental tales they gave the initial impulse; in this instance, though they did not originate the satiric tendency, they did assist in popularizing it.

In their satire Addison and Steele limited themselves to social customs and politics. As early as No. 50

of the Spectator, Addison handles satire in his account of "the very odd observations by four Indian Kings" as set down in a manuscript left behind them. St. Paul's they imagined to have been wrought out of a huge misshapen rock. "It is probable that when this great work was begun,.....many hundred years ago, there was some religion among this people; for they give it the name of a temple and have a tradition that it was designed for men to pay their devotions in.... But....I could not observe any circumstances of devotion in their behaviour.... Instead of paying their worship to the deity of the place, they were most of them bowing and courtesying to one another, and a considerable number of them fast asleep."

"This island was very much infested with a monstrous kind of animals, in the shape of men, called whigs;...apt to knock us down for being kings... (The tory) was as great a monster as the whig and would treat us ill for being foreigners." After ridiculing the wigs of Englishmen and the patches of English ladies, the observation closes, and Addison draws the moral that we should not be so narrow as these Indians, who regard as ridiculous all customs unlike their own. Another essay in the Spectator²⁷ simil-

²⁷ Spectator, No. 557.

arly modeled on The Turkish Spy or The Amusement, is a letter to the King of Bantam from his ambassador in England, 1682, criticizing the empty compliments of English social and diplomatic circles, and giving clever pictures of London life. In another essay, the story of the trans-migrations of Pug, the monkey, satirizes the ape-like character of the beau supposed to be incarnate in Pug.²⁸ In a humorous essay,²⁹ Will Honeycomb, apropos of "those dear, confounded creatures, women," suggest having a marriage fair as they do, he says, in Persia, where homely women are endowed with the money paid for beauties. He questions which would be the stronger motive in Englishmen, love of money or love of beauty. The same essay contains a story of a merchant in a Chinese town after a Tartar victory. He buys a sack for a high price, discovers in it an old woman, and is about to throw her into the river, but relents when she promises wealth. She keeps her promise, and their married life is contented. There is one piece of satire which has stirred up a good deal of controversy as to its genuineness, and this necessitates a good deal of discussion on my part.

28 Spectator, No. 343

29 Ibid., No. 511

The curious and strange letter of the Emperor of China to Pope Clement XI is printed in the Spectator, No. 545. I will attempt to prove from external evidence that it is a spurious document by discussing the reign of Emperor K'ang Hsi and his close and friendly relations with the Jesuits in the capital city of China to show that he could not have written the letter.³⁰ Then I will demonstrate from internal evidence that the letter is un-Chinese and that it was probably concocted by Sir Richard Steele to amuse the Whig wits of London in 1712. Since no authoritative history of K'ang Hsi period and no ecclesiastical historian, as far as time permitted me to search, mentions this letter or any similar letter of K'ang Hsi to the Pope in Rome, although two authors do quote the letter as genuine but fail to give their sources, my conclusions will be that the letter is a literary hoax.

Although detailed information about the life of K'ang Hsi, and his relations with the Catholic missionaries, especially the Jesuits is interesting, it does not seem necessary to include it here. However, for a better understanding of the background of Spectator No. 545, I

30 Cf. Appendix, p. 56.

thought it advisable to supplement a brief history of Emperor K'ang Hsi in an Appendix to this treatise.

Relative to the Spectator, No. 545, we can conclude with reasonable certainty that the letter is "a vehicle for satire." The letter is addressed to Pope Clement XI, who was pope from 1700 to 1721. The pope, who was reigning in 1665, was Alexander VII. The Emperor of China calls himself "Gionetta the VII" and gives the date of the letter "the eight Day of the third lunation, the fourth Year of our Reign." This date corresponds to April 1665. In 1665, K'ang Hsi was but eleven years of age and China was governed by his regents. Father Adam Schall was his tutor and friend, but at this time was in prison. In April 1665 he was being tried for treason, together with the other Jesuits in Peking. The regents were, to put it mildly, indifferent to foreigners in China and preferred to have no relations with the West. If K'ang Hsi wanted to write a letter to the Pope in Rome, he had no one to consult.

In the letter the Emperor calls himself "Gionetta the VII." K'ang Hsi was the second Manchu emperor, successor to Shun Chih who the first emperor of the Ch'ing or Manchu Dynasty. There is no possibility of justifying "the VII." Furthermore "Gionetta" is not a Chinese name.

Chinese officials are very precise about names. Emperors never used a foreign name. Emperor K'ang Hsi was never baptized a Christian and, hence, "Gionetta" could not have been his baptismal name.

The message of the letter is a request for a woman. It is unthinkable that the Emperor would write such a message. The Chinese, still today, frown on Eurasian marriages. At the time of K'ang Hsi the very idea of an imperial mixed marriage or a foreign concubine would have been preposterous. Chinese officials, as any other Chinese, maintain an impressively high code of external morality. What happens within the enclosure of their compounds is quite another thing, and the external world is not to know about that. K'ang Hsi, taught by Father Schall in religion as well as science, could never have composed such a request to Pope Clement XI. Nor could any Catholic have written or dictated the letter because they were all in prison at this time. Nor would he have written it later when the Jesuits were free. Abbe Huc relates that Verbiest instructed K'ang Hsi in virtue and inspired him with a knowledge of salvation.

Verbiest began by disabusing his mind entirely of the pagan fables and superstitions and little by little taking advantage of favorable moments and the monarch's avidity to learn everything, he instructed him in the truths which are the objectives of the Christian faith. (31)

With his knowledge of Western customs, Kang Hsi would never have requested a woman from Pope Clement XI. It may be pertinent also to state that the young Emperor's marriage and concubines were not of his own choice. Such affairs were arranged by persons responsible in the imperial family. In October 1665, K'ang Hsi was espoused to Ho She-li, grand-daughter of So Ni, the Manchu regent.³²

This request for the hand of Pope Clement's niece or that of some other great Latin Priest is entirely un-Chinese and historically untenable.

The description of the desired external appearance of "the Darling of God's Right Eye" is also unorthodox for a Chinese. The drama and literature of China have very stereotyped phrases for beauty, such as: "al-

31 Huc, op. cit., III, p. 72.

32 Ching Shih Kao, Seventh Book, ch. 6. There is no reference to an offer of marriage with a foreign woman in the records: K'ang Hsi Shih Lu, nor in the Ching dynasty records: Ch'ing Shih Kao.

mond eyes", "almond flower cheeks", "peach blossom lips", "cherry lips", "willow-leaf waist" etc. Though the woman described is European, it is unlikely that K'ang Hsi would find a woman "with a mouth of a Shell-Fish" attractive. Her age is not to "exceed 200 Courses of the Moon", which is equivalent to sixteen years, a proper marriageable age in China. However, "let her Stature be equal to that of an Ear of Green Corn" is confusing. The Italian text says that she should not be taller than "a blade of green wheat", which is rather small for a girl of sixteen.

The discrepancy between the Italian and English text relative to the date of the Emperor's letter suggests that the letter is not genuine. If the letter was genuine, great care for exactness in dates would have been shown. Possibly to give readers a hint that the letter was a joke, the author purposely gave different dates in the English translation.

The Italian text reads: "...il quinto giorno della terza lunatione L' anno quarto del nostro Imperio."

The English text reads: "...the eighth day of the third lunation, and the fourth Year of our Reign."

Since the first day of the third moon in the year 1665 was April 15th, the eighth day would be April 22nd, and the fifth day would be April 19th. Though these differences are small, it would seem that the author should have been exact in making the English text agree with the Italian Text.

The paragraph: "We exhort you to keep in Peace two good Religious Families of Missionaries, the black Sons of Ignatius and the white and black Sons of Dominicus...." is curious. During the reign of K'ang Hsi there were only Jesuits (Sons of Ignatius) in Peking, in prison at the date of the letter; the Dominicans (and Franciscans) were down in Chekiang and bitterly opposed the methods of the Jesuits.

The peace desired probably refers to the Rites Controversy, which lasted a little over a century, from about 1628 until the final papal decision, in 1742.

Much of the ecclesiastical Roman Catholic world entered into the discussion. Jealousies between orders, rivalries among European nations, the Portuguese claim of the right to control the Church in the Far East, and the rising tide of feeling against the Jesuits complicated the debate. The Pope finally decided against the toleration and sent to China two different embassies (in 1704 - 1710) and (1719 - 1721), led by Charles Maillard

de Tourno and Jean Ambrose Charles Muzzabaria, in an attempt to gain the acquiescence not only of the Jesuits but of K'ang Hsi. (33)

It is likely therefore that some Europeans, aware of the controversy, wrote this statement. England was furnished with ecclesiastical and political news from the continent in their papers and magazines.

An objection to the phrase "Imperial Signet" may be raised. The prize possession of the Manchu emperors was the Imperial Jade Seal. The Manchu conquered China not only because of their fine soldiers and superior discipline but also because circumstances conspired to aid them. The idea of the conquest of China was originated by T'ai Tsung, son of the Manchu leader Nurhachu (d. 1626). T'ai Tsung's acquisition of the Imperial Jade Seal, which had been lost, changed his position from a leader of scattered tribes to that of an emperor. The Imperial Jade Seal has a long history. Since the third century before Christ it was the symbol of authority and had a divine significance. On it was engraved "By command of Heaven to reign forever." This Imperial Jade Seal determined the right of the claim of

33 Latourette, Kenneth S., op. cit., p. 318

the ruler and the authenticity of his decrees. Hence K'ang Hsi would not have said "Imperial Signet" but "Imperial Jade Seal."

Hence we may conclude from the external data of the close and friendly relations of the early Jesuits with the Emperor that it is unlikely that K'ang Hsi at any time of his life would have written the letter. Chinese historical books make no mention of this letter; ecclesiastical sources do not mention it. From the internal evidence the letter may be judged spurious both by reason of the dates and the un-Chinese style, phraseology, and content.

The Spectator's introduction to the letter suggests a hoax. "What Progress the Negotiations between his Majesty of Rome and his Holiness of China make..." leads one to believe that the writer is joking. This introduction has another suggestive sentence:

I must confess I myself being of Opinion that the Emperor has as much Authority to be Interpreter to him he pretends to expound, as the Pope has to be Vicar to the Sacred Person he takes upon himself to represent, I was not a little pleased with their Treaty of Alliance.

The idea expressed and the interchange of the terms "his Majesty" and "his Holiness" suggests a subtle attack on the Infallibility of the Pope, a doctrine which seems to have irritated Sir Richard Steele. In 1715 Steele published Cerr's Account and prefaced³⁴ it was dedication to Pope Clement XI.³⁵ Steele's dedication is the Whig attitude towards Rome. It is very frank and sincere statement of his objections to the authority and policy of Rome and a justification for the Church of England.

34 Hoadly, Benjamin., Tracts and Pamphlets of Steele, ed. R. Blanchard, p. 347. The dedication, though signed by Steele, is B. Hoadly.

35 An Account of the State of the Roman-Catholic Religion throughout the World. /Written for the Use of Pope Innocent XI by Monsignor Cerrì, Secretary of the Congregation de propaganda Fide. Now first translated from an Authentick Italian MS. never published./ To which is added, A DISCOURSE concerning the State of RELIGION in England. Written in French, in the time of King Charles I and now first translated./ With a large dedication to the PRESENT Pope; giving Him a very particular Account of the State of Religion amongst PROTESTANTS; and of several other Matters of Importance relating to Great-Britain./ By Sir Richard Steele. London: Printed for J. Roberts, near the Oxford-Arms in Warwick-Lane. MDCCXV.

The point of interest with reference to No. 545 in the Spectator lies in his treatment of the Infallibility of the Pope:

I find that all the Infallibility with which your Holiness is illuminated, doth not disdain the Help of Human Information; and that your Accounts of the Religious, as well as Civil State of this Kingdom, are in a particular manner defective: And therefore I have resolved to act the Part of a Generous Adversary, and without Reserve to lay before you...such Things, as will give you a Juster Information of the State We of these Nations are in....

Your Holiness is not perhaps aware, how near the Churches of Us Protestants have at length come to those Privileges and Perfection, which you boast of, as peculiar to your own. So near, that many of the most Quick-sighted and Sagacious Persons, have not been able to discover any other Differences between us, as to the Main Principal of all Doctrine, Government, Worship, and Discipline, but this one; viz. That You cannot err in anything You determine, and We never do. That is, in other Words, that you are Infallible, and We always in the Right....We have all the Benefits of Infallibility, without the Absurdity of pretending to it; and without the uneasy task of Maintaining a Point so shocking to the Understanding of Mankind.

Divest Yourself of Your Infallibility: and ~~town~~ Your Self to be like One of Us.

And, for the Conclusion of this Great Work, celebrate an Open and Solemn Marriage, between Faith, and Reason: Proclaim an eternal Friendship between Piety, and Charity; and Establish an Agreement, never to be dissolved, between Religion, on one Side; and Humanity, Forbearance, and Good-nature on the other.

If your Holiness parts with Infallibility, it is but equitable that the Protestant Church should part with Indisputable Authority.

Let Christians cease to be called by their Names; and let them, who have One Master but one common Denomination.

Steele published the translation of Cerri's Account in 1715, but he certainly knew the original Italian text of 1677³⁶ before 1715 since it was widely distributed in manuscript. The large dedication to the present Pope summarizes his and the common Whig attitude towards the Pope in Rome. And this attitude is suggested in the opening lines of the introduction to the Emperor's letter and in the exchange of the terms "his Majesty of Rome" and "his Holiness of China," and in the sentence:

I must confess I myself being of the Opinion that the Emperor has as much Authority to be Interpreter to him he pretends to expound, as the Pope has to be Vicar to the Sacred Person he taken upon him to represent.....

36 Urbano Cerri, Secretary of the Propaganda (Rome) addressed his Stato della Religione Catholica in tutto il mondo to Pope Innocent XI in 1677. It was widely distributed in manuscript. Steele published the English translation in 1715, which was translated into French in 1716. The original Italian manuscript exists in two copies in the Archives of the Propaganda. Schmidlin-Braun, Mission History, p. 461.

G. Gregory Smith hesitantly attributes the letter to Steele:

Steele (if he was the author of this satirical letter from the Emperor of China) may have been familiar with Father Charles le Gobien's History of the Edict of Toleration granted by the Emperor, published in 1698. (37)

Steele was fervent Whig. Such a literary hoax, he knew, would amuse the Coffeehouse wits of London and would be a delightful joke to the Whig readers at the expense of the Pope, whom the Whigs disliked especially in 1712 because of the danger of the "Old Pretender" to the throne of England. Whether the reader believed that the letter was genuine was immaterial to Steele; his interest was to titillate his readers in this fashion; Look, the Church of Rome is disrupted by internal dissensions so far-reaching that the Emperor of China begs Rome's faction to come to terms. Still more, the Emperor, tutored by the Jesuits, wants to marry the Pope's niece with the intention of an alliance between China and the European Kingdoms. If we have a Catholic King in England, that same alliance would prevail. This powerful and clever Emperor may have designs

37 Henry Morley, in his 1891 edition of The Spectator, attributes No. 545 to Steele. In a note he adds: "No suggestion has been made as to the authorship of this squib of the Jesuits in China."

on our country. Let us unite against the "Pretender" and be loyal to our party program.

Some historians have accepted this letter as genuine. It is interesting to note that Rene Fülöp-Miller, in his book³⁸ The Power and Secret of the Jesuits, considers it authentic. He writes that the Jesuits told the Emperor "so much about the dignity and power of the pope that K'ang Hsi proposed a marriage relationship with the Prince of Christendom, and wrote a letter to the pope in which he sought the hand of the pope's niece. The original of this strange document, which is preserved in the archives of the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs, begins with this allocution:" (Then follows the text of the letter.)

Mrs. Hibbert in her book, Jesuit Adventure in China³⁹ quotes a section of this letter from Fülöp-Miller as her source and introduces it as follows:

This strange document which testifies that the desire for a European wife was no mere invention on the part of some foreigners bent on magnifying the emperor's interest in the West. If a reply was sent it was not made public and certainly the request was never granted.

38 Fülöp-Miller, Macht und Geheimnis der Jesuiten, Leipzig, 1929. English translation, F.E. Flint & D.F. Tait, The Power and Secret of the Jesuits, New York, Viking Press, 1930, p. 254.

39 Hibbert, Jesuit Adventure in China: New York, Dutton, 1941, p. 153.

Neither Fülöp-Miller nor Hibbert mentions the Spectator. Fülöp-Miller says that the original is preserved in the archives of the French Ministry; however, he fails to name the source of his information, unless he himself consulted the archives. The original would have been a real discovery, especially so because none of the Chinese historians mentions the letter and none of the sinologues has brought it to light.

I believe, then, it is possible to hold that the curious and strange letter of the Emperor of China to Pope Clement XI as printed in the Spectator, No. 545 is spurious, resting my claims on the external and internal evidence. Although two authors do quote the letter as genuine but fail to give their sources, my conclusion is that the letter is a literary hoax.

CHAPTER V

LITERARY EVALUATION

Upon a general survey of the four groups of oriental tales described in the preceding chapters, one is impressed by the exceedingly diversified nature of the collection, and by the presence of a sufficient number of common qualities to give the collection as a whole a distinctive character. In form this fiction includes within its wide range the frame-tale, in which stories, sometimes in letter-form, are enclosed; isolated apologues and other short tales used to point the moral of an essay of Addison or Steele; fantastic tales in which adventure is everything; tales equally fantastic but colored by satire; and tales with the thinnest possible thread of plot to sustain the predominant satiric, moralistic, or philosophic purpose. The characterization is uniformly slight, and tends toward more or less abstract types. The scene is laid in the Orient, from Egypt to China, or in Europe visited by Orientals; and is given

a picturesque background of strange Eastern custom, sometimes enriched by allusions to religious or philosophical beliefs, often by lavish use of magic and enchantment. Oriental or pseudo-oriental names aid in producing the desired effect remoteness. The language is usually colored by oriental phraseology and imagery, and is frequently, but not necessarily, figurative and inflated. On the whole, I would say the oriental background is pale and shadowy, details are sparse, and reference to Eastern manners and customs are few and far between. But in all this fiction there is a distinctly oriental flavor, distilled through the medium of eighteenth-century ideas.

The impetus to oriental literature in England was indirect in so far as it was directed by French taste. In England, the Arabian Nights and its companions were warmly welcomed, but there was no sudden efflorescence of imaginative and fanciful fiction on the part of English men of letters, as there had been in France. English writers at first contented themselves, as far as imaginative tales were concerned, with translating from the French. It was not until Addison and Steele intro-

duced the oriental imagery into their essays, that English writers began to take an interest in the literature of the Near and Far East, which as the decades of the eighteenth century began to unfold took on momentum, so that at the end of the century much of the literature of England is colored with oriental imagery.

It is easy for us to see how this Eastern imagery could be of interest to the forerunners of Romanticism, the Gothic Novelists and those interested in the primitive man. At the outset, Addison and Steele set the example of wresting the new imaginative oriental fiction just received from France out of its original shape into something more conformable to their sincere ideas of worthy literature. The question that seems to plague the reader in his study of these oriental essays of Addison and Steele is, Why were the imaginative tales so diverted to didactic purposes?

The environment into which the Arabian Nights and the Persian Tales came was that of an age which expressed itself most naturally in rationalistic prose and satiric verse. In England we have only to consider the

writings of Swift, Defoe and Pope. The moralizing tendency, characteristic also of the eighteenth century on the continent, has been called a fundamental instinct of the British character; and at that time was so powerful and widespread as to color all English literature. In an age so "wise and learned" such tales would be tolerated only when utilized to point a moral or illustrate a philosophic view. It is commonly held that the moralizing tendency and the rationalistic mood were two barriers opposed to the free development of imaginative oriental fiction. Furthermore, a barrier existed in the insularity of English life and thought. Aside from her connections with France, England was surprisingly insular in the early eighteenth century. Literary England was confined, in a large measure, to London alone, because of the practical difficulties of communicating with the country. Roads were bad, journeys difficult and perilous. Foreign travel was by no means so common as later in the century. The East was indeed the "Far East", chiefly used as figure of speech for fabulous wealth or excessive tyranny. From the numerous coffeehouses we gather London was England and England London. Mohammedanism was regarded as an imposture and Buddhism was practically unknown.

But, even had there been no such obstacles to overcome in the environment, a barrier to the free imaginative development of the oriental tale would have existed in the character of the first eighteenth century translations of oriental fiction. They lacked too frequently not only the graphic detail, which in accounts of far distant lands fascinates the reader, but also the deeper elements of characterization that make the whole world kin and are the most potent means of breaking down superficial barriers between alien peoples. When Galland prepared his version of the Arabian Nights for European readers, he omitted not only the coarseness of the original, but also many of its interesting minutiae, details which give to later translations the charm of good tales of travel, and produce in the reader the vivid sense of actually being in the picturesque Orient. The French and English successors of Galland followed him in this respect and fell short even of his achievements. It wasn't until after the middle of the eighteenth century that the English writers became really interested in the East. Why didn't the oriental literature appeal? Was it because it didn't emphasize the more fundamental elements of human character - the passions of

love, hate, ambition, revenge?

But in spite of all these barriers to the free imaginative development of this kind of literature, the rationalistic classicism; the moralistic, philosophic, and satiric moods; the insularity of the English people; and the alien characteristics of the oriental tale, in a small way it was popular. The reason of this popularity would seem to rest on this fact, that this type of literature was a manifestation of the Romantic.

The first and obvious reason for the limited welcome given the oriental tale by the London of Addison and Steele was that it came from France. Especially since 1660, French influence had prevailed in England, French literary critics were regarded as authoritative, and French fashions in literature were followed. Since, then, the vogue of the oriental tale was so great in France, it was naturally echoed in England. It was only natural that the return of Charles II to England from France, the French tastes would have a marked influence. Another reason for the welcome given the Arabian Nights and The Persian Tales, and the Oriental Essays of Addison and

Steele is found in connection with the history of the novel. The elements of interest essential to great narrative art are plot, character, and background. Of these essentials it has been said that the Sir Roger de Coverly papers possess two: admirable characterization and well-defined background; and that the absence of plot alone denies to Sir Roger de Coverly the name of the first English Novel. These elements Addison and Steele used in their oriental essays.

Before the death of the last great classicist of the century new forces were already at work, which were to bring the Orient much nearer to England than ever before. The growth of the Indian empire, of commercial intercourse with the East, and of the new democratic belief in the brotherhood of the whole world, helped to break down England's insularity and to awaken a fresh interest in the Orient. This increased interest was aroused by animated letters of travelers. Direct translation from oriental languages into English made a notable contribution to English knowledge of Eastern life and literature, and had a large share in turning the imagination of nineteenth century poets and story-tellers to-

ward the use of oriental material.

Although Addison and Steele have only scratched the surface, they were the pioneers, they made the beginning, which English writers later in the century elaborated on.

APPENDIX

The ruler of the Chinese Empire, at the date of this letter, was the second emperor of the Ch'ing or Manchu Dynasty, who bore the "reign title" of K'ang Hsi, meaning "Universal Peace." His reign lasted from 1662 until 1722, during which period the reigning pontiffs in Rome were Alexander VII (1655-1667), Clement IX (1667-1669), Clement X (1670 - 1676), Innocent XI (1675-1689) Alexander VIII (1689 - 1691), Innocent XII (1691 - 1700) and Clement XI (1700 - 1721). Of all the emperors who have occupied the dragon throne, none is better known to the Western world than this great Manchu monarch. Born in 1655, he came into public notice at the age of seven, when his twenty-year-old father died or retired, incognito, to a monastery, and, for the next sixty-one years, his actions and interests were the subject of the scrutiny, not only of the Manchu officers, Chinese archivists, and courtiers from the provinces, but also of European priests, foreign diplomats, and occasional travelers.⁴⁰

⁴⁰ Latourette, Kenneth S., The Chinese, Their History, Culture. New York, Macmillan, 1946, p. 316.

K'ang Hsi might have secreted himself behind the walls of the spacious yellow-tiled Imperial Palace, but being of a curious, independent, and virile spirit, he chose to travel widely about his empire, lead his troops in person, and associate freely and almost on equal terms with his foreign advisers. He was the first ruler of China to be in constant communication with European countries. Louis XIV of France and Peter the Great of Russia sent representatives to his court. He gave China a vigorous administration and promoted order, material prosperity and cultural activity. The magnificent porcelain vases bearing his name, exhibited now in all better museum the world over, remain a permanent memorial to his patronage of the arts and crafts during his reign.

The boy-emperor's education was supervised by his grandmother Bochita, a fervent Buddhist. Scholars, Manchu and Chinese, instructed him in the traditional classics and arts. In Western science, there was only the old German Jesuit, Father Adam Schall, the beloved tutor of his father, who could instruct him. Schall had been appointed royal astronomer, and elevated to the rank of mandarin of the first class by K'ang Hsi's father,

Shun Chih, who once said:

Ma Fa (Adam Schall) is a man without equal. Other mandarins serve me only for their own advancement in life and they never cease to demand favors. Ma Fa never requests anything for himself. He is content with having my good will. That is what I call being served with love and devotion. (41)

Bochita revered and protected Schall, not because she admired Western science but because her Shun Chih had been so attached to him. However K'ang Hsi's regents were influenced by a Mohammedan mathematician, Yang Huang-hsien, jealous of Schall's position and influence⁴² and anxious for promotion. Yang campaigned against Schall and the Christians in general stating that they were obnoxious to the Chinese Empire and that European astronomy was incorrect. The regents ordered Schall to be degraded and, together with his companions, imprisoned.

Exact astronomical calculations were of extreme importance to the Chinese Empire. The highest law of China was the Tao, the law of the universe, according to which the stars followed their courses the moon moved across the heavens, the sun was veiled in darkness, plants

41 Parker, E.H., Contemporary Review, "Adam Schall", April, 1912.

42 Bouvet, The History of Kang-Hy the Present Emperor of China, 1699.

sprouted, and the tides ebbed and flowed. Man's aim must be to adapt his life and actions in accordance with the operation of the Tao as a condition for attaining happiness and prosperity. It was the duty of the Emperor to direct the people by law and regulations so that man's Tao would harmonize with that of the Deity. The Emperor did this by issuing a calendar from year to year, the Indication of the Seasons. The calendar was prepared by the Imperial Tribunal of Mathematics with the help of astronomical instruments on the palace wall. Calamities and misfortunes were considered the result of errors in the calendar because, they thought, catastrophies could only happen if the actions of the people did not harmonize with the law of the universe. The calendar was the time schedule of China, regulating marriages, holidays, construction and all the details of life. Hence should unpredicted phenomena occur, or predicted events fail to happen, the nation was disturbed and people lost faith in the Emperor.⁴³ The Jesuit missionaries had previously gained renown and respect by their exact astronomical and mathematical calculations

⁴³ Semedo, Imperio de la China, p. 131.

and inventions. Already in 1629 they were ordered to manage the correction of the Chinese calendar; in 1630 Schall was entrusted with the duty and responsibility of the entire calendar.⁴⁴

K'ang Hsi's regents were, on the whole, indifferent to Schall and his companions until he predicted, in the calendar for 1661, that on "the eight month Mercury would not be visible" and proved that the Mohammedan astronomer Yu's calculations were wrong. Punishment for such a grave order was death but Schall pleaded for Yu and saved him. Yu's friend, Yang Kuang-hsien, waited for revenge. According to Bouvet, Yang published a book attacking the truths of the Christian faith and stated: "Their books are badly explained, their style is defective and they understand nothing."

In September, 1664, Yang, after bribing the officials, presented an official indictment against the Jesuits and the Christians to the Ministry. They were accused of high treason on three counts: that they had conspired against the State; that European astronomy was

⁴⁴ D'Elia, The Catholic Missions in China, p. 101.

incorrect. Schall was immediately deprived of his official position and, together with his three companions, was arrested and imprisoned.

The trial lasted several months. On January 4th, the Department of Justice announced their sentence by authority of the regents. Schall was to be strangled; the other three Jesuits were to be beaten and banished. The execution of the sentence was delayed. It happened that an eclipse of the sun was due and the government took this opportunity for a test case. The Chinese, the Mohammedan, and the Jesuit astronomers were ordered to predict the exact time of the eclipse. Western science was at stake. The government would prove to the Empire the correctness or the falseness of the foreign priests. The story is related by Rowbotham in Missionary and Mandarin:

The affair was carried out in solemn state. At the Bureau of Astronomy were gathered the privy council, the ministers of state, the officials of the observatory, and a host of mandarins. According to Verbiest, the struggle between the "Dragon" and the Sun should begin about three o'clock, the Mohammedan officials set it at a half-hour earlier, the Chinese three-quarters of an hour earlier. It was a tense moment in the hall where the crowd were gathered to see the discomfiture of the foreigners. Slowly the minutes went by; then from the mandarin in charge came the announcement "The hour of forecast of Yu." Nothing happened. Another fifteen

minutes elapsed then the announcement: "The hour of the forecast of Yang." But the sun was shining undimmed in the Heavens. Another half-hour went slowly by as the crowd waited in suspense..... Then, at precisely the hour named by Verbiest, a film began to protude itself across the face of the sun. The sky gradually darkened as the eclipse progressed. Once more the foreign priests had vindicated their learning.

But the Department of Justice did not liberate the Jesuits. In February, they learned that their sentence was confirmed. From March to May the trials continued. More accusations were brought against them; Schall was accused of the death of the former Emperor Shun Chih. In April, Schall was sentenced to the Ling Ch'ih, dismemberment by slicing of the living body; his companions were sentenced to flogging and banishment. While they were awaiting the execution of their sentences, a severe earthquake shook the city, houses collapsed, and many people were killed.⁴⁵ At the same time a fire broke out in the palace and a dust storm darkened the sun. The palace was in panic. The regents considered themselves out of harmony with the Tao. They consulted K'ang Hsi's grandmother in their dilemma. She refused to approve the sentence of Schall and reproved them for their injustice. On May 18th, Schall was finally released, aged and broken in health. His influential life at the court came to an end; he died on August 15th, 1666.

⁴⁵ De Mailla, S.J., Histoire Generale de la China, XI p. 88.

But his student Ferdinand Verbiest, a Belgian, was there to take his place.

In 1671 K'ang Hsi removed the regents and took complete charge of the government. He manifested immediately an interest in the foreign scholars. The Jesuit Verbiest, at his request, examined the calendar of the Mohammed Yang and pointed out grave errors. So certain was he of his authority that he insisted that the intercalary month, inserted by Yang in the year 1669, be taken out. This involved the public loss of face for many high officials. Verbiest's victory on this occasion established the superiority of Western science. He was appointed director of the Bureau of Astronomy. Many officials showed interest in scientific questions and to accomddate them Verbiest gave lectures on mathematics and astronomy. With the assistance of Chinese scholars, he wrote primers on science, thirty-three volumes on astronomy alone.⁴⁶

The Emperor studied geometry, philosophy, and music under Verbiest. He was so enthusiastic in his studies that for five months he had Verbiest come daily to

⁴⁶ Rowbotham, Missionary and Mandarin, p. 94.

the palace to instruct him. Verbiest says in his Astronomia Europia:

At break of day I went to the palace and was immediately admitted to the Emperor's apartments, and often did not leave until three or four after midday. Alone with the Emperor I read and expounded. Often he kept me to lunch and served exquisite meats on a plate of gold. (47)

The Emperor was so well disposed toward Verbiest that, in 1676, he conferred on him the title of mandarin and issued a decree ennobling his ancestors.

K'ang Hsi studies were interrupted by the uprising of Wu San-kuei. To safeguard the Empire, he needed cannons. He called upon Verbiest to repair the Schall-cannons or make new ones. Verbiest constructed the cannons, engraved the name of a Christian saint on each gun and consecrated them in public.⁴⁸

During the following years K'ang Hsi remained on friendly terms with Verbiest, inviting him to take part in his hunting expeditions, using him as an interpreter in the palace, consulting him in matters of state, and discussing science and philosophy with him. The Emperor was now about thirty years old and gave every indication of becoming a glorious leader in the annals of

47 Allan, C.W., Jesuits at the Court of Peking, Shanghai, p. 187.

48 Huc, Le Christianisme in Chine, III, p. 91.

China. Verbiest describes in superlatives his sense of justice and his interest in government. But the strain of years of strenuous work weakened Verbiest's health and he fell sick. Le Compte wrote:

It began with a Faintness and an ^Universal Decay of Nature, which grew into a Consumption. The Emperor's Physician kept him up some time with the help of Physick, especially Cordials, in which the Chinese have a wonderful Success; but his Fever increasing, at length was forced to yield to Nature.....(49)

The Emperor was so concerned over Verbiest's sickness that he sent his personal physicians to attend him. When Verbiest died, he ordered a state funeral.

He sent two Lords of Highest Quality to pay him on his behalf the same Devoirs which private Men usually pay to their. They read aloud his Encomium which the Emperor himself had composed and which was to be set up near the Corpse. (50)

The Emperor's encomium indicates his respect and love for Verbiest. Le Compte quotes a section of it:

We seriously consider within ourselves, that Father Ferdinando Verbiest, has of his own good will, left Europe to come into our Dominions, and has

49 Le Compte, Louis., Memoirs and Observations, 1697, p.48.
50 Le Compte, Louis., op. cit., p. 48.

spent the greatest part of his life in our Service; We must say this for him, That during all the time that he took care of the Mathematicks, his Predictions never failed, but always agreed with the Motions of the Heavens. Besides, fare from neglecting our Orders, he has ever approved himself to be Exact, Diligent, Faithful, and Constant in his Labour, till he had finished his Work, and ever the same. As soon as We heard of his Sickness, We sent him Our Physician, and when We knew that a dead Sleep had taken him away from Us, Our heart was wounded with a lively Grief. We give Two thousand golden Crowns, and some pieces of Silk, as a Contribution to the Charges of his Funeral: And it is Our Pleasure that this Dedication bear Witness of the Sincere Affection We bore him. (51)

During the long years between 1628 to 1742 there was a bitter quarrel between missionaries in China and religious orders in Europe over the proper Chinese word for "God" and the permission for the Chinese converts to perform their customary rites to Confucius and to their ancestors.⁵² This controversy raged throughout all Europe. Pamphlets flooded Europe bitterly debating the policy of the Jesuits in China. Delegates were sent to the Emperor. Though they annoyed him, he did not allow the controversy to break his word and friendship for the Jesuits.⁵³

51 Le Compte, Louis., op. cit., p. 49.

52 Rowbotham, Arnold H., op. cit., Chapter IX.

53 Latourette, Kenneth S., op. cit., p. 319.

ABSTRACT

Since very early times the East and its literature has been a source from which the West has freely borrowed. There always remained some connection with and influence of the East, sometimes less strong, sometimes more so, when through some particular event such as the Crusades, the invasions of the Turks and Mongols, the exploration of India, and in the eighteenth century, the conquest of India by the English and the study of oriental languages and history, it received a fresh impulse.

In the Spectator, Tatler, Guardian and Freeholder we see how easily Addison and Steele came under the charm and spell of the Orient. These two essayists made good use of the coffeehouses to give a picturesque background to their oriental stories. It was in the coffeehouses, the rendezvous of sailors, travelers and the intelligentsia of England, that the Spectator picked up his bits of information of the lands across the seas. We notice that these "bits of information" have a tendency to appeal to the imagination since the stories are highly imagina-

tive, moralistic, philosophic and satiric. Thus we thought it best to group the Essays of the Tatler, Spectator, Guardian and Freeholder into four groups, Imaginative, Moralistic, Philosophic and Satiric.

Addison has been been accused of not indulging the powers of imagination in his poetical effusions, but it may justly be asserted, that he has amply atoned for the deficiency in his prose compositions. In those essays that we have selected as illustrative of his oriental imagery, we find it very powerful, simple and elevating. At times we find there is made a strong appeal to the senses. "Misty clouds, shining seas, flowers, fruits, sheep, camels and oxen, soft and soothing music," all are artistically presented to the reader's eye or ear and enables him to enjoy the oriental setting. The sweetness and simplicity of Addison's and Steele's diction, add, more than is usually imagined, to the effect and poignancy of these interesting tales.

In the moral essays Addison and Steele have followed the definition of moral as defined by the learned lexicographer, Dr. Johnson: "Doctrine inculcated by a fiction; the accomodation of a fable to form the morals."

Surely this definition best characterizes the numerous moral oriental tales in eighteenth-century England - the tales we designate as moralistic. In the hands of Addison and Steele the oriental tale was speedily utilized to inculcate right living and was made into a story "with a purpose," in a word became moralistic. The importance of the moralistic tales rests on this, that Addison initiated the method employed in writing moral oriental tales. This method was enlarged upon and perfected by Dr. Johnson, Dr. Goldsmith and others. The attitude that Addison and Steele took towards this oriental material and the use they made of it are exceedingly interesting to the students of the period, even though the actual tales ~~they~~ composed are so few and so trifling.

Although the Philosophic Group of oriental stories is in number far smaller and in literary value far considerable than the Moralistic. Here, again, Addison and Steele were the guides using several oriental stories to illustrate philosophical ideas. The philosophical oriental stories in the periodicals illustrate various themes: the transitoriness of life, the subjectivity of time, personal identity, and so on. The eighteenth-cen-

tury, the age of Reason made a strong appeal to the intellect. Thus we can not, but admire how Addison and Steele could make such dull speculative ideas appealing in their oriental garb.

In satire Addison and Steele followed the French who used satire to criticize contemporary society, morals and politics. In this form of literature they did not originate the satiric tendency, but they did assist in popularizing it. One satirical essay seemed to call for more particular scrutiny, viz., number 545 of the Spectator. Realizing that this rather lengthy discussion would throw the treatise all out of proportion and tend to crowd the major theme, we deemed it worthy to add an Appendix which gives in fuller details the Emperor K'ang Hsi's life and relations with the Jesuits. We feel that in their satire Addison and Steele have become highly instructive. The oldest satirists had dressed their satire in foreign attire, and so these popular essayists of their times were quick to make use of the oriental stories as a vehicle of satire.

Roughly speaking the Tatler, Spectator, Guardian,

and Freeholder extend over a period of fifteen years, yet the oriental lore found in them seem to merit a study of its influence. These periodicals appear early in the eighteenth-century, from 1709 to 1725. This century was called the "Age of Enlightenment", Age of Reason," a time we are naturally led to believe that eschewed anything fanciful or imaginative. When these papers were being literally devoured by frequenters of the coffeehouses, there appeared on the scene the Arabian Nights. These oriental stories made their effects felt not only on continental literature but also on English. They first appeared in France and soon made their way across the channel to England, which at that time was apeing everything French. Addison and Steele were the first to introduce the oriental imagery into their essays, and to arouse the English writers to take an interest in the literature of the Near and Far East, which as the decades of the eighteenth century began to unfold took on momentum, so that at the end of the century much of the literature of England is colored with oriental imagery.

The first eighteenth century translations of oriental stories did not quickly grasp the English fancy.

Reasons are not too hard to find. They lacked too frequently not only the graphic detail, which in accounts of distant lands fascinates the reader, but also the deeper elements of characterization that makes the whole world kin and are the most potent means of breaking down superficial barriers between alien peoples. Addison and Steele, although essayists, were journalists, they knew the pulse of the reading public. They took these oriental stories, distilled their thoughts and ideas, and made them appeal. The elements of interests essential to great narrative art are plot, character, and background. In the oriental essays we find admirable characterization and well-defined background.

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